

November 16, 2016

President-elect Donald J. Trump  
Trump-Pence Transition Team  
1717 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20006

**Re: Ending the Cable Box Rip-off**

Dear President-elect Trump:

People across the country feel like the system is rigged against them. And why shouldn't they? Big business and government seem like they have their own agendas that ignore the democratic will of the people.

In the field of technology policy, not every issue resonates with ordinary people. But Americans know how much [they're getting ripped off](#) by their cable TV and broadband providers, and [they're not happy](#).

One way to chip away at this ongoing rip-off is by unlocking the box -- letting people access their expensive cable and pay-TV subscriptions on the device of their choice, without having to pay a monthly rental fee to a cable provider. The Federal Communications Commission has considered approaches to doing that over the past two years. This comes after 20 years of delay by industry insiders, after Congress mandated these choices for consumers in 1996.

The prospect of unlocking the box has excited people around the country, winning the support of editorial boards nationwide and resulting in hundreds of thousands of demands calling for the FCC to take action. From the [Globe Gazette](#) and [Chicago Tribune](#) to [The Boston Globe](#) and [USA Today](#), it's clear that Americans are eager to stop paying rental fees on these dumb boxes.

Meanwhile, the prospect of loosening the control that pay-TV giants have over how Americans watch TV has been subject to a massive disinformation campaign from pay-TV, media giants and their lobbyists.

We're well aware that [some people in the Republican and Democratic establishments](#) have sided with the cable and Hollywood lobbyists on this issue. They'd rather let these industry giants decide what's best for ordinary consumers than let the people decide for themselves.

President-elect Trump, these outrageous cable box rental fees have dogged consumers for decades thanks to powerful Washington insiders and cable lobbyists. We urge you to join with millions of Americans to get the FCC to unlock the box, a proposal that benefits all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gene Kimmelman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gene Kimmelman  
President & CEO